Privatisation of Port activities

3045. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to privatise port activities in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Bombay Port Trust has already allotted a container berth to American President Lines, the US Shipping major; and

(c) if so, the details and what are the other ports proposed to be allotted to private parties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view the liberalised policy, the Government welcome schemes for privatisation of port activities.

(b) No, Sir. The Bombay Port has not yet allotted any container berth to the American President Lines.

(c) Schemes of each Port will have to be examined on its merits.

Construction of Express Highway between Delhi and Chandigarh

3046. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to construct an Express Highway between Delhi and Chandigarh, if so, the details thereof;

(b) by when the four-laning of G. T. Road from Delhi to Ambala is likely to be completed;

(c) whether there is a proposal to convert National Highway from Delhi to Ferozepur via Rohtak, Hissar, Sirsa into four-laning, if so, what is the time schedule; and

(d) whether Government propose to declare inter-State Highway into a National Highway, between Delhi, Rohtak, Jind, Narwana, Paren and Ludhiana and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Delhi to Murthal Section of Delhi-Ambala National Highway is already 4 lane wide. Work of 4 laning Murthal-Karnal Section is in progress. Work on Karnal to Ambala Section is yet to start.

(c) Delhi-Bahadurgarh Section of Delhi-Rohtak-Sirsa National Highway is already 4 lane. The Section from Bahadurgarh to Rohtak has been included for 4 laning in the Eighth Plan. It has not been possible to include the remaining section from Rohtak to Sirsa for 4 laning in 8th Plan due to resource constraints.

(d) No, Sir.

Probe into Mishap of "Vaishva Mohini"

3047. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the high-powered fact finding committee constituted to go into the circumstances leading to the floundering of Shipping Corporation of India Vessel "Vishva Mohini" in the sea, off the coast of Spain has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details of the report indicating therein the fixing of the responsibility for any lapse;

(c) the amount of compensation paid to each of the survivors and to the next of kin of those dead or missing; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to avoid such kind of mishap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) No high-powered fact finding Committee has been constituted. However, the Govt. of India had ordered a preliminary enquiry into the incident in accordance with Merchant Shipping Act. On the basis of the Preliminary report, an application has been moved before the Metropolitan Magistrate, Bombay for conducting formal investigation. Hearing of the case is yet to commence.

(c) In consonance with the bi-partite agreement between the SCI and the respective Unions, the quantum of compensation will be in the range of Rs. 11.69 lacs to Rs. 5.50 lacs for officer, Rs. 3,22,910 to 2,08,718 for crew and Rs. 4.25 lacs for petty officer.

(d) All sea-going ships are surveyed at least once every year by the Mercantile Marine Department and the Classification Societies to

ensure that the vessels comply with relevant safety standards as per various International Conventions and the Rules made under Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

Amendment in Merchant Shipping Act

3048. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering to amend the Merchant Shipping Act to enable them to acquire the much-needed tonnage for replacement and expansion if so, and the details thereof;

(b) what would be the basis of amendment, if any and the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the amendment, would ease borrowing for Indian Shipping Industry from abroad since financial institutions had been hesitant in giving loans to them, if so the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The proposed amendments relate to the provisions regarding registration of ships and foreclosure of mortgages. Since bulk of the ships required for the national trade are acquired by the Indian shipowners from abroad, they are critically dependent on the availability of foreign exchange. International Banks, financial institutions are both willing and in a position to provide funds to the Indian ship owners provided the provisions regarding registration of ships and the foreclosure of mortgages, which are perceived as impediments by them to recover their loan in the event of default in repayment, are amended.

Port and Dock Employees Association, Visakhapatnam

3049. SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Port and Dock Employees Association, Visakhapatnam have not been called for any negotiations by the Port Management even though minor unions like The National Port Trust Employees Union and Port & Dock Workers Union with comparatively less membership have been called for such negotiations by the Management;

(b) if so, what are the reasons; and

(c) whether Government would consider directing Visakhapatnam Port Trust Management to extend similar treatment as per the law which has been extended to minor unions, if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) and (b) The Management of Visakhapatnam Port Trust calls only four trade unions which are recognised from the time of formation of the Port Trust. This does not include the Port and Dock Employees Association. No other unions have been recognised thereafter by the Port Management. However, the Port Trust is allowing the Port and Dock Employees Association, Visakhapatnam to explain their issues to the Chairman, whenever the Association demands so.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

Passes Issued by D.T.C.

3050. SYED SIBTEY RAZI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether State Transport Authority of Delhi has issued some instructions through Press in July, 1993 to owners of 'Suvidha Buses Operators' to honour all categories of passes issued by D.T.C.;

(b) if so, the details of these instructions;

(c) whether S.T.A. of Delhi has also given a number of Telephone number viz. 230782 asking the pass holders to report to STA in case their passes are not honoured by Suvidha Bus Operators;

(d) if so, details thereof and procedure for taking action on such complaints;

(e) whether it is a fact that the pass holders are not being permitted to travel against their passes by Suvidha Operators;

(f) whether it is also a fact that the words 'All passes are allowed' have not been written on these Suvidha buses despite STA's instructions;

(g) whether Government propose to take some action against these operators;

(h) whether Government also propose to take some action for writing Route numbers and destination by these operators in case pass holders are not allowed to travelling; and

(i) if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor ?